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THE
ACCVSATION
AND
IMPEACHMENT
OF
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LORD
FINCH,
BARON OF FORDWICH,
LORD
KEEPER OF THE GREAT
SEAL OF ENGLAND,
BY THE
House of Commons.

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Printed Anno Dom. 1640.

Jan. 14. 1641

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OF
JOHN

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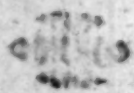
LORD

KEEPER OF THE GREAT

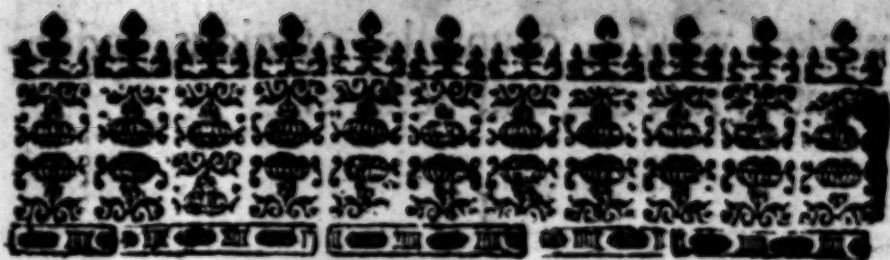
SEAL OF ENGLAND

BY THE

House of Commons.



Printed Anno Dom. 1840.



THE
ACCUSATION
AND
IMPEACHMENT
of *John*, LORD *Finch*, Baron
of *Fordwich*, LORD KEEPER
of the Great Seale of *England*, by the
House of COMMONS.



Imprimis, That the said
John Lord *Finch* Baron
of *Fordwich*, Lord Kee-
per, &c. hath traiterously,
and wickedly, endeavou-
red to subvert the funda-
mentall Lawes, and esta-
blished government of the Realme of Eng-
land, and in stead thereof to introduce an ar-
bitrary tyrannical government against Law,
which hee hath declared by traiterous and
A 3 wicked

wicked words, counsells, opinions, judgments, practices, and actions.

II.

That in pursuance of those his traiterous and wicked purposes, he did in the third and fourth year of his Majesties reigne, or one of them, being then speaker of the Commons house of Parliament, contrary to the commands of the house then assembled, and sitting, denied and hindred the reading of some thinges which the said house of Commons required to be read for the safety of King, and Kingdome, and preservation of the religion of this Realme; and did forbid all the members of the house to speake, and said that if any did offer to speake, hee would rise and goe away, and said nothing should bee then done in the house, and did offer to rise and goe away, and did thereby and otherwise, in as much as in him lay, endeavour to subvert the ancient and undoubted rights and course of Parliaments.

III.

That he being of his Majesties Councell at the Justice seat held for the County of Essex in the moneth of October, in the 10. year of his now Majesties reigne, at Strafford Langton

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Langton in the same County, being then of his Majesties Councell, in that service did practise by unlawfull meanes, to enlarge the Forest of that County, many miles beyond the knowne bounds thereof, as they had beene enjoyed neare 300. yeares, contrary to the Law, and to the Charter of the liberties of the Forest, and other Charters, and divers acts of Parliament, and for effecting the same, did unlawfully cause and procure undue returns to be made of Jurors, and great numbers of other persons who were unsworn to be joyned to them of the Jury, and threatened and awed the said Jurors to give a verdict for the King, and by unlawfull meanes did surprise the County that they might not make defence, and did use severall menacing wicked speeches, and actions, to the Jury, and others, for obtaining his unjust purpose aforesaid, and after a verdict obtained for the King in the moneth of Aprill following (at which time the said Justice seat was called by adjournment) the said *John Lord Finch* then Lord chiefe Justice of his Majesties Court of Common Pleas, and was one of the Judges assistants for them, he continued by further unlawfull and unjust practices, to maintaine and confirme the said verdict, and did then & there being assistant to the Justice in eyre, advise the refusall of the traverse offered by

by the County, and all their evidences, but onely what they should verbally deliver, which was refused accordingly.

IV.

That he about the moneth of November, 1635. he being then Lord chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, and having taken an oath for the due administration of Justice to his Majesties liege people, according to the Laws and Statutes of the Realm, contrived in opinion in *hac verba*, (when the good and safety, &c.) and did subscribe his name to that opinion, and by perswasions, threats, and false suggestions, did sollicite, & procure Sir *Iohn Bramston* Knight, then and now Lord chiefe Justice of England, Sir *Humphrey Davenport* K^t. Lord chief Baron of his Majesties Court of Exchequer, Sir *Richard Hutton* Knight, late one of the Justices of his Majesties Court of Common Pleas, Sir *Iohn Denham* Knight, late one of the Barons of his Majesties Court of Exchequer, Sir *William Jones* Knight, late one of the Justices of the said Court of Kings Bench, Sir *George Crook* then and now one of the Judges of the said Court of Kings Bench, Sir *Thomas Trevor* Knight, then and now one of the Barons of the Exchequer, Sir *George Vernon* Knight, late
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one of the Justices of the said Court of Common Pleas: Sir *Robert Barkley* Knight, then and now one of the Justices of the said Court of Kings Bench, Sir *Francis Crawly* Knight, then and now one of the Justices of the said Court of Common Pleas, Sir *Richard Weston* Knight, then and now one of the Barons of the said Court of Exchequer, some or one of them to subscribe with their names the said opinion presently, and enjoyned them severally some or one of them secrecy upon their allegiance.

v.

That he the day of then being Lord chiefe Justice of the said Court of Common Pleas, subscribed an extrajudiciall opinion in answer to questions in a letter from his Majesty, *in hac verba, &c.*

And that hee contrived the said questions, and procured the said letter from his Majesty; and whereas the said Justice *Hutton* and Justice *Crooke* declared to him their opinions to the contrary; yet he required and pressed them to subscribe, upon his promise that hee would let his Majesty know the truth of their opinions; notwithstanding such subscriptions which neverthelesse hee did not make knowne to his Majesty, but delivered the

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same

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same to his Majesty as the opinion of all the Judges.

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That hee being Lord chiefe Justice of the said Court of Common Pleas, delivered his opinion in the Chequer Chamber against Master *Hampden* in the case of Shipmony; that hee the said Master *Hampden* upon the matter and substance of the case was chargeable with the money then in question: a copy of which proceedings the Commons will deliver to your Lordships, and did sollicite and threaten the said Judges some or one of them to deliver their opinions in like manner against Master *Hampden*: and after the said Baron *Denham* had delivered his opinion for Master *Hampden*, the said Lord *Finch* repaired purposely to the said Baron *Denham's* Chamber in Serjants Inne in Fleetstreet, and after the said Master Baron *Denham* had declared and expressed his opinion, urged him to retract the said opinion, which he refusing, was threatned by the said Lord *Finch*, because he refused.

VII.

That he then being Lord chiefe Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, declared and published

published in the Exchequer Chamber, & westerne circuit where hee went Judge, that the Kings right to Shipmoney as aforesaid, was so inherent a right to the Crowne, as an Act of Parliament could not take it away; and with divers malicious speeches enveighed against and threatned all such as refused to pay Shipmoney; all which opinions contained in the foure, five, and sixth Articles, are against the law of the Realme, the subjects right of property, and contrary to former resolutions in Parliament, and to the petition of right: which said resolutions and petition of right, were well knowne to him and resolved and enacted in Parliament when he was Speaker of the commons house of Parliament.

VIII.

That he being Lord chiefe Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, did take the generall practise of that Court, to his private Chamber; and that he sent warrants into all or many Shires of England to severall men, as to *Francis Giles* of the County of Devon, *Robert Benson* of the County of Yorke Attorneys of that Court, and to divers others, to release all persons arrested on any utlawry about 40. shillings fees whereas none by law so arrested, can be bayled or released without superseas

superseas under seale or reverfall.

IX.

That he being Lord chiefe Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, upon a pretended suit begunne in Michaelmas Terme in the 11. yeare of his Majesties Reigne, although there was no plaint or declaration against him, did notoriously and contrary to all law and justice, by threats, menaces and imprisonment, compell *Thomas Laurence* an executor, to pay 19. pound 12. shillings, and likewise caused *Richard Barnard*, being onely overseer of the last will of that Testatour, to bee arrested for the payment of the said money, contrary to the advice of the rest of the Judges of that Court, and against the knowne and ordinary course of justice, and his said Oath and knowledge, and denyed his Majesties subjects the common and ordinary justice of this Realm, as to Master *Limericke*, and others, and for his private benefit endamaged and ruined the estates of very many of his Majesties subjects, contrary to his oath and knowledge.

X.

That hee being Lord Keeper of the great
Seale

Seale of England, and sworne one of his Majesties Privy Counsell, did by false and malicious slanders labour to incense his Majesty against Parliaments, and did frame and advise the publishing the declaration after the dissolution of the last Parliament.

All which Treasons and misdemeanours above mentioned, were done and committed by the said *John* Lord *Finch* Baron of Fordwich, Lord Keeper of the great Seale of England, and thereby he the said Lord *Finch* hath trayterously and contrary to his allegiance laboured to lay imputations & scandals upon his Majesties government, and to alienate the hearts of his Majesties liege people from his Majesty, & to set a division between them, and to ruine and destroy his Majesties Realme of England, for which they doe impeach him the said Lord *Finch*, Baron of Fordwich, Lord Keeper of the great Seale of England, of high Treason against our Sovereigne Lord the King, his Crowne and dignity, of the misdemeanours above mentioned. And the said Commons by protestation, saving to themselves the liberty of exhibiting at any time hereafter, any other accusation or impeachment against the said Lord *Finch*, and also of replying to the answer: that the said *John* Lord *Finch* shall make unto the said Articles or to any of them, and of offering

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offering proofe of the premises, or any of
their impeachments or accusations that shall
be exhibited by them as the case shall accor-
ding to the course of Parliaments require,
doe pray that the said *John, Lord Finch*, Ba-
ron of Fordwich, Lord Keeper of the great
Scale of England, may bee put to answer to
all and every the premises, and such proce-
dings, examinations, tryalls, and judgements,
as may be upon every of them, had and used
as is agreeable to Law and Justice.

FINIS.

